

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A user interface comprising an actuatable icon representing a shadow direction for an object to be rendered that when actuated actuates the rendering of a shadow having the shadow direction from the rendered object.

2. The user interface as defined in Claim 1, further comprising an actuatable icon representing a shadow length for the rendered shadow that when actuated actuates the rendered shadow having the shadow length.

3. The user interface as defined in Claim 1, wherein the actuatable icon is a menu item on a menu.

4. The user interface as defined in Claim 3, wherein the menu item is a numerical expression.

5. The user interface as defined in Claim 4, wherein the numerical expression is selected from the group consisting of degrees and radians.

6. The user interface as defined in Claim 3, wherein the menu item is a compass point direction.

7. The user interface as defined in Claim 3, wherein the rendered object having the shadow direction is rendered upon the menu.
8. The user interface as defined in Claim 7, further comprising a print actuation icon that when actuated actuates the printing of shadowed objects having the shadow direction.
9. The user interface as defined in Claim 8, wherein a word processor software application actuates the display of the menu.
10. The user interface as defined in Claim 7, wherein the printing operation is selected from the group consisting of printing, magnetic tape recording, photo imaging substrate recording, and magneto optical storage device writing.

11. In a word processor software application, a user interface for actuating demand printing and for displaying a menu having a plurality of menu items, the user interface comprising:

a predetermined object that is rendered on the menu; and
an actuatable icon displayed on the menu as one said menu item and representing a direction for rendering a shadow as being cast from the rendering of the predetermined object, wherein upon actuation of the actuatable icon the shadow is rendered upon the menu, having an appearance of being cast from the rendered predetermined object, and having the direction for rendering the shadow.

12. The user interface as defined in Claim 11, further comprising an actuatable icon on the menu as one said menu item and representing a shadow length for the rendered shadow that when actuated actuates the rendered shadow having the shadow length.

13. The user interface as defined in Claim 11, wherein the menu item is a numerical expression.

14. The user interface as defined in Claim 13, wherein the numerical expression is selected from the group consisting of degrees and radians.

15. The user interface as defined in Claim 13, wherein the menu item is a compass point direction.

16. The user interface as defined in Claim 13, wherein the actuation of the actuatable icon is actuated by a pointing device manipulating a point on the menu.

17. The user interface as defined in Claim 16, wherein:

the point is on the rendering of the predetermined object; and

the pointing device manipulates the point by a point, click, and drag operation.

18. A method for displaying a rendering of a shadow, the method comprising:

serving a user interface for display as a menu;

displaying a rendering of a predetermined object upon the menu;

displaying an actuatable icon as a menu item on the menu, the icon representing a selection of a shadow direction for the predetermined object; and

upon the actuation of said menu item by said selection, rendering a shadow having the appearance of being cast from the rendered object in the selected shadow direction.

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19. The method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising:

displaying a second actuatable icon on the menu as a second menu item representing a selectable shadow length for the rendered shadow; and

upon the actuation of said second actuatable icon, rendering the shadow having the selected shadow length.

20. The method as defined in Claim 18, wherein the menu item is a numerical expression.

21. The method as defined in Claim 20, wherein the numerical expression is selected from the group consisting of degrees and radians.

22. The method as defined in Claim 18, wherein the menu item is a compass point direction.

23. The method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising a print actuation icon that when actuated actuates a printing operation for printing characters in a file that are shadowed in the selected shadow direction.

24. The method as defined in Claim 23, wherein a word processor software application actuates the display of the menu.

25. The method as defined in Claim 23, wherein the printing operation is selected from the group consisting of printing, magnetic tape recording, photo imaging substrate recording, and magneto optical writing on to storage devices.

26. A computer-readable media containing computer-executable instructions that, when executed on a computer, performs the method as defined in Claim 18.

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27. A shadow rendering system comprising:

- a display device;
- a host computer in electrical communication with the display device and performing a demand print application program including the steps of:
 - serving a user interface for display as a menu on a screen of the display device in communication with a host computer;
 - rendering a display of a predetermined object on the menu;
 - displaying an actuatable icon as a menu item on the menu, the icon representing a selection of a shadow direction for the predetermined object; and
 - upon the actuation of said menu item:
 - executing an application program on the host computer to calculate a rendering of a shadow having the appearance of being cast from the rendered predetermined object in the selected shadow direction; and
 - displaying the calculated shadow rendering as being cast from the rendered predetermined object in the selected shadow direction.

28. The system as defined in Claim 27, wherein:

the shadow rendered by the application program executing on the host computer has a default length; and

the demand print application program further includes the steps of:

displaying a second actuatable icon on the menu as a second menu item representing a selectable shadow length for the rendered shadow; and

upon the actuation of said second menu item, said application program executing on the host computer further performing the step of rendering the shadow having the selected shadow length.

29. The system as defined in Claim 27, wherein the menu item on the menu is a numerical expression.

30. The system as defined in Claim 29, wherein the numerical expression is selected from the group consisting of degrees and radians.

31. The system as defined in Claim 27, wherein the menu item is a compass point direction.

32. The system as defined in Claim 27, wherein:

the host computer is in electrical communication with a printing device; and

the demand print application program includes the steps of:

displaying an actuatable print icon as a menu item on the menu;

and

upon the actuation of the actuatable print icon, the demand print application program executes a printing operation upon the printing device that prints shadowed objects having the selected shadow direction.

33. The system as defined in Claim 32, wherein the printing device is selected

from the group consisting of a printer, a magnetic tape recorder, a photo imaging substrate recorder, and a magneto optical writer.

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